International Studies Council
Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2024
ZOOM Hybrid

Chair: Bogdan Prokopovych **Recorder:** Kimberly Stender

Participants: Madalina Akli (CHC), Mark Eckman (IPO), Julia Feldhaus (HFA), Cai Fischietto (Libraries), Justin Gross (SBS), Melina Masterson (HFA), Bjorn Nordtveit (COEd), Simon Oswald (HFA), Elsa Petit (CNS), Krishna Poudel (SPHHS), Ken Reade (IPO), David Rodriguez-Solas (HFA), Kalpen Trivedi (IPO), Laura Vandenberg (ORE), Janna White (Five College Center for World Languages)

Sent Regrets: Tobias Baskin (CNS), Ann Becker (Nursing), Irena Bozin (UWW), Richard Chu (HFA), Irene Dujovne (CNS), Stephen Forrest (HFA), Jaikai Lu (CNS), Marjorie Melnick (HFA), Fareed Mohammed (GSS), Daniel Pope (HFA), Anisha Shonda (SGA), Jackie Urla (Graduate School)

Guests: Pius M (secretary, GSS International Student Affairs committee

1. **Approve Minutes from December 4 , 2023**
   Janna White moved to approve the minutes with proposed changes and Elsa Petit seconded. The motion passed with 3 abstentions.

2. **IPO Update**
   Kalpen Trivedi reported that the Office of Research and Engagement and IPO are pleased with the 30 strategic and collaborative research proposals received for seed-funding with the University of College Dublin. Proposal topics were varied and ranged from ancient history to engineering. Proposals will be reviewed later this week with award announcements to follow. Kalpen reported that the second call for collaborative research proposals with Baden Wurttemberg Cooperative State University will be announced in Fall 2024. Laura added that establishing comparable seed-funding on the other end of bi-direction arrangements takes time. Kalpen reported that the inaugural virtual symposium on polymer science and engineering featuring faculty and leadership from UMA and Hokkaido University (Japan) was a success. Ken Reade reported that the number of newly arrived Spring semester graduate students continue to increase each year. This past February just over 200 graduate students arrived on campus. He added that his staff is currently processing I-20 paperwork for Fall 2024 arrivals while simultaneously handling over 1,000 Optional Practical Training records for F-1 students. Mark Eckman reported that there are over 725 students currently studying abroad. His staff is recruiting and advising for Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 programs. The Study Abroad Fair held on February 26 attracted approximately 600 students. Mark reported that January programs are becoming very popular especially the Cyprus program and the Business in Italy program. He added that study abroad program deadlines (November 1 and April 1) are not impacted by the academic calendar.

3. **COPE Update**
   Mark anticipates 1-2 proposals for January 2025 study abroad opportunities and will share these with the group at an upcoming meeting.

4. **iStep Program Presentation**
   Julia Feldhaus explained in detail the iStep program which is based within the German and Scandinavian Studies Department and prepares STEM and engineering students for employment beyond graduation through study abroad experiences (STEM courses in target language), internships in Germany, and career coaching. The iStep program is in its sixth year and has 50 majors connected to it. Julia explained that there is too much red tape at UMass regarding the logistics of setting up international internships and too few staff to help students with the application process. In the future she would like to create a global career services office and hire more staff to support students.

5. **ISC Chair Report to the Faculty Senate**
   Bogdan shared a draft of the report and asked for feedback via email. He will then send the completed report to the Faculty Senate Secretary.

6. **ERG-International Faculty/Staff Update**
   No report

7. **Adjourn**
   Bogdan adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for April 1, 2024.